

Interview with Eric Newman, likely March 3, 2006, discussing the Newman Money Museum exhibit on women and numismatics.

Audio File: 20060303 140636

Disk: E4

SPEAKER: All right. Let's get the female department. These are... oh goodness, you will love this.

WOMAN: Aren't they cute?

SPEAKER: Purses. Look at these.

WOMAN: They are so ornate. It's so ornate.

SPEAKER: You've never saw such purses as we have. We have a collection of purses that will knock your eyes out.

WOMAN: I've never seen anything like this.

SPEAKER: No, I'm sure you haven't. These are all Woodstock foundation gift. Something are women's and some are not. I wonder if I should separate these? That is a mans. This is a deep pocket, snap. See, you keep a deep pocket for one side and oh, it has a shallow pocket for the other side. This is probably a man's. And see, his gold here and small change and silver here so he has two different places to reach in.

WOMAN: So, that is where the expression "deep pockets" came from?

SPEAKER: Well, because deep pockets come from while you are trying to protect your money you have a longer pocket so that it can't fall out.

WOMAN: Fascinating. That means you have something of value in it.... In your deep pocket.

SPEAKER: Here is a... this is a zippered purse.

WOMAN: They are so cute.

SPEAKER: Zippered other coin purse for attachment to clothing by thongs. I guess you tie this to yourself.

WOMAN: Yeah, so you don't lose it.

SPEAKER: That is a child's purse, I guess.

WOMAN: I don't know. I know plenty of adults who need to have something tied to them.

SPEAKER: These are, this is World's Fair St. Louis.

WOMAN: Oh, no kidding. Wow.

SPEAKER: House of electricity.

WOMAN: Fun.

SPEAKER: And here is something else you've never seen before either, this is for a woman to have concealed coins in her underwear.

WOMAN: Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh.

SPEAKER: This is protection money so that she could go home and in case her date gets drunk or what have you; then, look at this, this is just a ring on here and you... the ring don't come off. It slides on to the loop and now she can get to her money and slide the ring over her money again and then she hooks this on to some part of her clothing. She can put this with a couple pieces of money in there and she can put it on her bra or draw string or corset in the back anything like that.

WOMAN: That is so clever. Oh my gosh. That is wonderful.

SPEAKER: This is a wrist money. I guess we ought to clean this up some day.

WOMAN: You just carry it around on your wrist?

SPEAKER: Yes.

WOMAN: Oh my gosh.

SPEAKER: This is so she has... good lord. What did I do here? This doesn't seem to.... I don't know why...

WOMAN: Maybe it corroded or something.

SPEAKER: We'll have to figure out what happened here. Something was caught.

WOMAN: That's neat. That's a very interesting little thing.

SPEAKER: This doesn't spring back. Well, a woman wears this on her wrist.

WOMAN: They were very clever weren't they?

SPEAKER: Look! This is a beautiful thing; it has coins on it and this is for... money

WOMAN: Oh wow. It's gorgeous.


SPEAKER: I don't know. This is a diversion but it sure is...

WOMAN: Well, everybody will love it.

SPEAKER: What is that called? Do you know what that is called?

SPEAKER: Which one?

WOMAN: That one.

SPEAKER: Yeah, this is a savings bank which tells you how much money you are saving. This is for dimes and as you fill this up with dimes, it tells you by virtue of which is filled, it tells you how many dimes you have and when you fill it completely, it pops off the bottom and opens up. I'll have to oil these up a little bit. So, that is a counter. These are... this is probably a child's purse. This is an English children's purse for  shilling and 3, 6 and 1 shilling.

WOMAN: It's spring loaded too?

SPEAKER: Yes, so that the child won't lose it and then this is an American dime purse so you can slip a dime out of here to make a payment by just pushing it in and sliding it out. You see, push it in... it was hard on the coins, so you have all dimes and you can keep this in your purse. This is again for a woman who is going out, oh my goodness, this is a gold piece that she is supposed to wear. She's supposed to wear a gold piece or two so that she can two or three and a half gold pieces and then put this inside on a chain. Here is a similar one with.... Well, this is spring loaded so that she can have a larger coin in there. This is a butterfly neck holder for a woman. You have no idea what we've done for women in the way of money.

WOMAN: I'm impressed. I'm very impressed.

SPEAKER: Sure you are.

[Laughing]

WOMAN: This is a beautiful little thing. It's beautiful; they're so pretty.

SPEAKER: This is, I don't know I've had maybe a hundred purses downstairs but these are the most beautiful. Look at this for an attractive...

WOMAN: Very pretty. The beading is in such an amazing condition.

SPEAKER: It used to be. There is one of the beaded purses. This will be attractive to the women.

WOMEN: I think everyone will love it. I mean, it's fascinating.

SPEAKER: Nobody is ever... you don't realize how pleasant this was for all of these women. Here is one, English half pound and pound coinage, gold and that is just again a silver container. Oh, this is a cutie. This is called the Brite Spot; an ever ready nickel holder. And look they put the nickels all over and then you put this in your pocket and when you want to spend one you just pull it out. It has a spring that holds all of the nickels in, so all you do is pull one out and this never....

WOMAN: Ever read, huh? Like the battery.

SPEAKER: Yeah. Here are some... I didn't know....

WOMAN: You didn't know you had coins in those?

SPEAKER: Oh, I usually put them in there. They used to not be worth very much and now I'm shocked. This is an American gold coin holder. Look at that beautiful engraved design. You see, that again is for the ritz, because can a girl get her hands through that?

WOMAN: Well, we're all bigger than they used to be.

SPEAKER: Yeah.

WOMAN: So, that makes a big difference. So, I think so. I would think so.

SPEAKER: There would be a snap. This one doesn't have a snap so this doesn't.... Here is an American one with the pictures of the coins that go in there. Oh yeah, this will make a beautiful... the pictures of the coins that go on there and you can hold that. Here is a kidney shaped holder. Boy if you don't think I got all this crooked?

WOMAN: Is that newer? What era would these be?

SPEAKER: These are all from the 1890s.

WOMAN: These look almost brand new.

SPEAKER: They haven't been used. I don't know if they are all American, I'll have to check. It says... it has a number.... "R"-something, something, something; something. I guess that must be English. That looks like an English 3-coin holder in the kidney shaped. Here is a coin holder like the one I just showed you. It has dirt on it. I'll have to get the dirt off of some of these. One-cent, five, twenty's and tens and twenty-fives so you put the coin in the... and it does the spring... isn't that amazing?

WOMAN: It is amazing. They're really fun.

SPEAKER: And here is some, here is a US twenty-five and fifty cent holder. These are... were gold. In fact, you just put it in your pocket like the others. Here's another one. This is British. See, this is for a woman to have a one-pound and half-pound gold piece. British. So, both the Americans and the British had the... I think we should only show the American ones, but they are both spectacular.

WOMAN: They really are.

SPEAKER: This is very unusual.

WOMAN: The amazing thing is that some of them look so new and this it is made out of cloth and it is like perfect.

SPEAKER: I know. These are not new at all. I've had them for at least 30 or 40 years.

WOMAN: That is why they look so good.

SPEAKER: Well, because I picked them up from the early markets and early flea markets and I keep them... well, I have lots more. But this will give you some idea.

WOMAN: Now, is this a wallet? Is this for coins for for bills?

SPEAKER: That's a wallet. This has "RT".

WOMAN: Somebody's initials?

SPEAKER: Yes, she had her initials put on that.

WOMAN: Oh my goodness.

SPEAKER: And this has... that that used to be for her coins and I guess this was for her paper money.

WOMAN: We still make things that look very much like that.

SPEAKER: Huh?

WOMAN: We still make things that look very much like that. Nothings Changed.

SPEAKER: No, nothings changed.

WOMAN: Nothing is new.

SPEAKER: Nothing is new. Do they still make stuff like that?

WOMAN: Oh yeah, they do, for woman. They're bigger now because we carry all other kids of

SPEAKER: What is this thing? This is the original... never been used.

WOMAN: That is what it looks like.

SPEAKER: Yeah, I can use.... I can clean these up a little. All right. Well, that will give you some idea. I have men's purses by the ton too.

WOMAN: You do?

SPEAKER: Oh sure. You see, men used to have holders for their coins in their pockets and I haven't seen these in a long time.

WOMAN: They really, really are wonderful. I have to look at this close. They are so beautiful. Wow.

SPEAKER: I need to put these in a different bag.

WOMAN: Tell me where a bag is and I'll go get you one.

SPEAKER: They are in the basement, but I'll get them. We may need more that we'll throw out. Oh, that's coming a part.

WOMAN: It's just the lining I think.

SPEAKER: Yeah, that's just the lining coming out.

WOMAN: The lining is silk and it's really fragile.

SPEAKER: Yeah, we've had a little learning here and I will leave these for a little.... Now Woodstock, oh I know the woodstocks....Let's see what else we can find in here. Oh boy. Oh, here is why I have this... Am I on the computer?

WOMAN: Yes.

SPEAKER: Okay. This is a twenty-dollar bill of the Old National Bank of Elgin Illinois which shows on its back the baptism of Pocahontas. This was a design, do you remember she was educated by the whites and I think she was even taken to England? Here is the scene of her so-called baptism.

WOMAN: Wow.

SPEAKER: I've been looking for this one for a long time. I don't think this one is going to go on women. I'm going to take this out of the women and use it elsewhere. This is what is called a Jacobs Ladder to hold postage currency. The postage currency of the Civil War was called fractional currency or fractional money and could be put in to this kind of a holder; marked postage currency, five and ten there and here twenty-five and fifty and this would be held in a Jacobs Ladder and to get it out you would to get it out... I don't know if you know what a Jacobs Ladder is?

WOMAN: It's almost like a trick, right?

SPEAKER: It's strapped in so that it can change positions so that you can use it like a book or anything else and just slide the item out of there. I want to keep this out of here, that I show this to so many. I'm going to lay it out a little flatter. I don't know where that goes.

WOMAN: It is a very neat...

SPEAKER: This has some other stuff that has nothing to do with women. This is photocopy. Here is a view called the Hydraulic Press Room of the United States Treasury. This is where the printing of bonds and currency took place. This is 1869 where the women were working along side of the men doing virtually the same jobs. This was Treasury Department; they always employed women. Here you can see they are dressed, out with the wire or flared out skirt or bustle and I thought that would be interesting and here is a view of the women leaving the Treasury building after work and it shows how they were dressed and how many of the women were at work in the Treasury department.

WOMAN: It's kind of amazing. It's amazing actually that they had that many women.

SPEAKER: The women were much more dexterous than the men in for work on currency. Now, this is the views of the women on paper money showing some of the women... here is Martha Washington on a one-dollar bill. Here are women in allegoric positions; that's on a five-dollar bill. On the twenty, these are all very strong, heavy set women on the Alexander Hamilton piece. Here is fractional currency with typical strong women.

WOMEN: Are these real people?

SPEAKER: No, she's the only one. So, the idea... the whole idea of having women on money was because they didn't want too much portraiture. The original coins have just a woman either with blowing hair or with a liberty cap or something; an emblem of liberty and she was representing liberty. A comic leather purse with a poem, "I am sending in advance a pair of my old pants". This is a purse in the shape of pants.

WOMAN: Oh, that is darling.

SPEAKER: This is men's again. We are going to put some of these....I'll put these back here. I'm finding all kinds of stuff.

WOMAN: This is... oh my gosh, a shoe. I wasn't expecting that.

SPEAKER: Women and their money, I don't know what this... oh here, on the coinage we'll just show the coinage with the different emblematic and symbols of women. This is Sir. Walter Raleigh and I don't know who the woman was. the birth of Virginia Dare. So, this is Virginia Dare on the one piece andWell, these just show the various heads of women on coinage. Look at this. Now, the important and interesting women on coins were on a commemorative coin for the World's Fair in Chicago in 1892 there was a portrait of Queen Isabella of Spain. So, we had a Spanish Queen on the.... Well, I think it is Isabella. I hope it isn't Ferdinand.

[Laughing]

SPEAKER: These are handled by a board of lady managers and distributed by them in order to raise money. That was just a woman on there. Oh, here is a liberty head woman. Well, why did I have this in here? Oh. On some of these the fake half-pence in Britain which were circulated in the United States and were made for the United States, they have a figure of a woman. I don't think I'll show this. To me, it sounds... well, it belongs elsewhere. That goes elsewhere.

WOMAN: Okay.

SPEAKER: Let me see what else I'm going to find in here.

WOMAN: They look like such a different color?

SPEAKER: These were open in the cases and this has its natural...

WOMAN: Oh, they've aged.

SPEAKER: This is beginning to be toned down by...

WOMAN: Oh.

SPEAKER: Spring actuated pocket holder. That goes in here. Oh, well this is a woman stereo view of a woman preparing money. This is ... I must have showed you a....

WOMAN: Oh wait. It was in the beginning. Is this him? No.

SPEAKER: No. Well, that could be. Yeah, I'll put this together. Oh, here is a Susan B. Anthony dollar, 1979. Well, these are more women.... These are the Saint Goddess woman; beautiful standing liberty in the gold piece and the... now we put this in the This is a high laced shoe and look at the size of the woman's ankle.

WOMAN: Now you know how those things fit around their wrists. So, tiny.

SPEAKER: Look how beautiful this was made. This is the D.K. Company. Look at the heel and the color of leather and black trim.

WOMAN: It doesn't look like anyone ever wore them.

SPEAKER: We have them. I wonder....

WOMAN: First year...

SPEAKER: Oh this is a [40:27] that shows it is customary as the Treasurer of the United States. Being Treasurer of the United States has nothing to do with the Secretary of the Treasury. It is just more or less a political position in which she gets to sign the various Federal Reserve notes issued by the United States. So, this started in 1949 and is still going on. So, these women who have political loyalty to whatever party is in can get in there. This is a group of the women all from the Treasury position and nothing to do with politics. We'll have to bring this up to date if we want to use it.

END.